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ABSTRACT

This document describes the work of the Pupil Services Branch of the Maryland State Department of Education in its efforts to assist school districts and individual schools in the state in examining the causes of student disruption and in developing programs that are aimed at impacting disruptive students and creating more effective schools. A section on the historical background of state efforts to help disruptive youth briefly describes pilot programs which focused on long-term direct interventions (Alternative Programs); short-term direct interventions (Extended Pupil Services Programs); and long-term indirect interventions (Total School Intervention Programs) aimed at providing training and technical assistance to administrators, department heads, teachers, and guidance counselors in improving instruction and school climate in order to reduce student disruption. Total School Intervention Programming is explained and two model Total School Intervention Programs are described: the Instructional Leadership Project (ILP) and the Teacher Decision Making (TDM) Project. Five ways that the ILP staff provides services to meet system, school, and individual needs are listed, and four ways that the TDM facilitators provide services to participating schools are given. Evaluation of the two programs and dissemination of Total School Intervention Programs are discussed. (NB)

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DISRUPTIVE YOUTH PROGRAMS IN MARYLAND

Prepared for the Pupil Services Branch,
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DISRUPTIVE YOUTH PROGRAMS IN MARYLAND

Recent Gallup polls (1984) show that parents and educators see discipline as the number one problem in the schools today. As part of a Maryland study to determine the extent of student disruption, administrators indicated that 35% of Maryland's secondary school students displayed behavior which caused teachers to refer them to the school administrator on an average of three to four times a year. Although it would be inaccurate and misleading to label all of these students disruptive youth, they have certainly created the bulk of disruption in the schools. In an attempt to reduce student disruption, the Maryland State Department of Education has assisted the local education agencies in examining the causes of disruption and developing programs that are aimed at creating more effective schools.

The National Association of Secondary School Principals, in its publication Disruptive Youth: Causes and Solutions (1977), concluded that "disruptive behavior is caused by an interaction of factors found in (1) the individual, (2) society, and (3) the school. No one factor is solely responsible." Therefore no one program model can be used to effectively deal with all three forces simultaneously. Educators have a limited ability to deal with individual factors contributing to disruption which may result when students' physical or emotional needs are not met. Certainly, educators cannot single-handedly change the factors in American society which tend to contribute to the disruptive behavior of youth. They cannot, for instance, prevent divorce nor ensure equal economic opportunity. Specially designed alternative centers or extended pupil services programs can help students cope with these problems. The one factor on which educators alone can have a major impact are those forces of disruption that are caused by school factors: its policies, programs, and people (Purkey, 1984).

Although school factors alone do not cause student disruption, Timmerech (1978) asserts that both teachers and students contribute to discipline problems. In fact, teachers can create discipline problems as a result of inappropriate classroom management, unclear expectations, poor instruction, and lack of understanding of students' needs (e.g., learning styles, social--emotional factors, etc.). Schools can also cause discipline problems that result from poor school climate, a lack of collaboration in the decision making

process, and the absence of energizing staff development activities (Purkey, 1984, Rutter, 1979, Brookover, 1979). In such situations, as Minnich (1983) noted, "it may be more meaningful to speak about disruptive schools or disruptive classrooms rather than disruptive students."

It should be clear that educators can and must address the problems of student disruption and design specific programs that will deal with the forces of disruption in a proactive rather than a reactive manner (Dumaresque & Blust, 1984). The Pupil Services Branch of the Maryland State Department of Education is assisting school districts and individual schools in developing programs that impact on disruptive youth, programs that are practical, cost-effective, and research-based.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In 1974 the Maryland Senate passed Resolution 74 which directed the State Superintendent of Schools to appoint a special task force

> to make an in-depth study of the changes needed in the educational systems throughout the state to enable the schools to work effectively with the increasing percentage of youth who cannot function within regular school programs and to develop suitable alternative programs.

The state task force in conjunction with the Association of Secondary School Principals conducted a study in 1975 to find solutions to the problems of school disruption. The task force suggested several alternative programs and types of services which could be used to deal both with disruptive students (grades 7-12) and potentially disruptive students (K-12). Initially, federal funds were used to develop two pilot school programs. Then from 1977 to 1983, the Maryland Legislature appropriated additional funds to pilot further programming.

The pilot programs fell into three categories:

- long-term direct interventions (Alternative Programs)
- short-term direct interventions (Extended Pupil Services Programs)
- long-term indirect interventions (Total School Intervention Programs) aimed at providing training and technical assistance to administrators, department heads, teachers and guidance counselors in improving instruction and school climate in order to reduce student disruption.

The pilot Alternative Programs addressed the needs of a small group of disruptive students, and these programs have resulted in a significant improvement in these students' attendance, a reduction in suspension, and an increase in basic skills achievement. Extended Pupil Services Programs, such as time-out rooms and special guidance programs, also served a limited number of disruptive students. These programs have also proved effective in increasing target students' attendance and basic skills achievement as well as in reducing office referrals and suspensions. Both types of programs dealt primarily with disruption resulting from individual and social forces which school administrators believed these were the primary causes of disruption. These programs provided additional services directly to highly disruptive students. They had the disadvantage of being quite costly.

The last type of program to be developed were Total School Intervention Programs which dealt with forces of disruption resulting from school policies, programs, and people. These programs addressed the needs of a large number of students and have proved effective in improving, on a school-wide basis, student attendance and basic skills acquisition as well as in reducing disruption as measured by office referrals and suspensions. Not only did they serve a wider population, they also cost less money.

Although programs which emphasize changing the school factors that contribute to student disruption are within the control of educators, MSDE found that these programs needed special attention because administrators needed to be trained to facilitate change in their schools. In some ways, it appeared easier to try to change the students than to change the policies, programs, and people on the staff.

Effective as of July 1, 1984, the General Assembly of Maryland passed a bill that provided for the appropriation of monies for "allocation to the local education agencies to support the development of special programs for disruptive youth," administered by the State Superintendent of Schools. Each local education agency may apply for state support for any one of these special program models for disruptive youth. The "Disruptive Youth" Bill also provides funds for training and technical assistance to school administrators and instructional leaders so that they can work more effectively with their staffs to develop programs to reduce student disruption. The Pupil Services Branch of CUSP designed and continues to sponsor a training institute on disruptive youth (Academy #9) for school administrators and other instructional leaders through the Maryland Professional Development Academy. This institute is

> designed to help administrators identify and analyze the forces leading to disruptive student behavior. Special emphasis will be given to a review of the three levels of "disruptive youth programming" . . . and specific educational and administrative strategies used to reduce disruptive student behavior. Development of pilot projects will be expected of all participants.

The institute on disruptive youth stresses the concept of improving instruction, collaborative decision making, and school climate as the basis for reducing disruption caused by school forces. Institute staff assist participants in developing proposals for disruptive youth funding that address these school improvement issues.

TOTAL SCHOOL INTERVENTION PROGRAMMING

The goal of the Total School Intervention Programs is to improve the instructional climate of the school and thus improve attendance and achievement and reduce student disruption. Achieving such outcomes requires change, so it is the facilitating change literature that provides the basis for the design of the Total School Intervention Programs. An examination of the research on Instructionally Effective Schools, School Improvement, and Organization Development provides a coherent focus for implementing school change. Six characteristics of successful school change programs common to all three bodies of research provide guidelines for Total School Intervention Programs (Berman & McLaughlin, 1977, Huberman & Miles, 1984, Clark, Lotto & Astuto, 1984, Fullan, Miles, & Taylor, 1980, Purkey & Smith, 1984, Schmuck & Runkel, 1985):

- clear goals and expectations
- collaborative planning and problem solving
- flexible programs based on local choice
- training, technical assistance and follow-up
- development of internal change facilitator capabilities
- system-wide support

In assisting local education agencies in developing successful and flexible disruptive youth programs based on local choice, the Pupil Services Branch of CUSP assists schools with data analysis in such areas as school climate, student achievement, attendance, student suspensions, and office referrals. Applying the findings from current research, the Pupil Services Branch encourages and facilitates the development of school teams for collaborative

goal setting and action planning which focus on improving school climate and instruction. These school teams receive training from Pupil Services staff in improving instruction and classroom management as well as in the process of facilitating change. The teams take on the responsibility of providing staff development and follow-up for their faculties and, over time, develop their own capabilities as internal change facilitators. Pupil Services works with local education agencies to develop system-wide support for the Total School Intervention Programs.

This resource model for delivery of service is predicated on identifying school-based leaders who will serve as a resource to classroom teachers, provide professional development on a wide range of instructional improvement topics to those teachers, and work closely and collaboratively with the school principal (Griffin, Barnes, O'Neal, Edwards, Defino, & Hukill, 1984). These school-based leaders ensure the transfer of training by establishing a norm for collaboration and engaging in peer coaching so teachers can practice in their classroom the techniques they learned in staff development sessions (Joyce & Showers 1982, Little, 1981). In this way, classroom teachers acquire the skills to deal more successfully with students' academic and behavioral needs. They learn to use a variety of teaching techniques more effectively as well as to create a positive school and classroom climate that promotes student success and reduces student disruption.

In the past, successful Alternative Programs and Extended Pupil Services Programs which provided direct services to disruptive students have had to face the problem of returning those students to their old school environments which had in part contributed to their problem behavior. As noted earlier, although these programs have been successful in improving the attendance, achievement, and behavior of targeted students, these improvements tended to be short-lived unless students received special follow-up services and support and returned to a school with an improved instructional climate.

Thus is it that Pupil Services has seen the need to promote and fund long-term indirect intervention programs that facilitate change in the schools and in teacher practice. The emphasis on improving instruction and school climate has helped schools in Maryland become more responsive to the needs of all students, including those who are disruptive.

MODEL TOTAL SCHOOL INTERVENTION PROGRAMS: ILP and TDM

The Pupil Services Branch of CUSP has been working with local education agencies since 1977 in developing pilot programs to reduce student disruption. Two of those programs have been developed and refined to the point that they now serve as models for the Total School Intervention Programs in the state. Both the Instructional Leadership Project (ILP) and the Teacher Decision Making Project (TDM) are based on the six characteristics of successful school change programs described in the previous section of this paper. Both employ a resource model for delivery of service. And both ILP and TDM focus on improving instruction and school climate through staff development and team development. The difference in these two model programs lies in their primary focus. ILP focuses primarily on change at the school level while TDM focuses primarily on change at the classroom level.

The Instructional Leadership Project

The Instructional Leadership Project (ILP) began in Anne Arundel County in 1980 as a pilot project funded by MSDE with Disruptive Youth (DY) monies from the State Legislature. It was an outgrowth of a very successful but relatively costly DY project which provided reading, math, and community liaison specialists to assist the staff at Marley Junior High, a school in northern Anne Arundel County perceived as severely disrupted. The Marley Project (1977-1980) was designed to reduce student disruption by improving instruction. The additional resource personnel, funded by MSDE, provided one-on-one direct assistance to classroom teachers in lesson planning, active teaching, and classroom management. During the three year funding of the Marley Project, there was a slight increase in student achievement, a 4% increase in student attendance, and a sharp decrease in student suspensions.

The Instructional Leadership Project was originally conceived as a relatively low cost effort using a resource model to provide assistance to middle/junior high schools by developing the skills of department chairpersons in instructional leadership. The concept was that by providing training and technical assistance over a three-year period to identified school-based leaders, they in turn would be more willing and able to provide assistance to classroom teachers in improving instruction, classroom management and school climate.

The ILP resource model relied on trained facilitators to provide services to selected secondary schools. The ILP staff, which began with three people in 1980, funded entirely by MSDE, increased in size for the first three years to a total of ten as it took on new schools. Additional funding was provided by the county. Because a three-year program is designed for each school, a limited number of schools were allowed to join each year. By 1986, all thirty-two secondary schools in the county had participated in the ILP. Although MSDE continues to provide technical assistance and support to the ILP, the program is almost entirely funded by the Anne Arundel County Board of Education.

There are five basic ways in which the ILP staff provides services that meet system, school and individual needs.

I. School Team: ILP facilitators meet regularly with school teams of department chairpersons and administrators to establish and implement goals and objectives based on the school's concerns for improving instruction. They facilitate those meetings and offer strategies and processes for problem solving and facilitating changes identified by the team.

II. Individual Consultations with Department Chairpersons: Each department chairperson receives continuous support from a member of the ILP staff who also works with the school team. The ILP staff assists each department chair in developing collaborative procedures and processes for implementing the department's instructional goals. The concept of coaching provides a foundation for these regular meetings (Joyce & Showers, 1982).

III. Inservice Sessions: With input from participants, the ILP plans and conducts workshops in a variety of formats which address the components of the program. These workshops focus on the process of facilitating change as well as on strategies to improve classroom management and instruction that participants can then share with their teachers.

IV. Collaborative Planning with Principals: To ensure that the locus of change is centered within the individual school, the ILP staff meets regularly with individual principals. These meetings serve to determine the best ways to focus on instruction in each school based on its needs, resources, and preferences.

V. Principals' Steering Committee: The principals involved in this program meet regularly with members of the ILP staff and appropriate central office representatives to discuss instructional concerns and provide guidance for the project.

The primary focus of the ILP has been on improving instruction in secondary schools by developing leadership teams in the schools and increasing communication, collaboration, and participative decision making on instructional issues. It has sought to accomplish this goal through the use of organization development processes aimed at increasing each school's capacity for solving its own problems. Although school-based professional development activities are a major component of the ILP, the kind of services that the staff provides to schools is not content based. This distinguishes the ILP team from others in the county who provide services to teachers in specific curriculum areas. Another distinguishing characteristic is that the ILP staff does not work with schools to implement any one particular innovation because there is no one "right" answer for all situations.

The Teacher Decision Making Project

The Teacher Decision Making Project (TDM) was developed in 1983 by the Pupil Services Branch of CUSP. It grew out of a need to provide an increased focus on the instructional issues related to classroom management and disruptive youth. Noting that a conceptual framework for consciously analyzing instruction was missing from the ILP program, TDM was introduced in 1983 to a small group of master teachers who helped develop this program.

The primary purpose of TDM is to investigate techniques for assisting teachers in making purposeful instructional decisions. It is based on the premise that if teachers are aware of the numerous variables affecting instructional decision making, the probability of selecting appropriate teaching strategies and techniques will increase proportionately, thus reducing disruption caused by unwise instructional decisions.

TDM was piloted in Baltimore City Public Schools in 1984 funded with Disruptive Youth (DY) monies from the State Legislature. Six Baltimore City elementary school principals who participated in the Maryland Professional Development Academy on Disruptive Youth requested TDM training for their instructional support staff and master teachers who then provided services to classroom teachers in improving instruction. A 15 session, 3 credit workshop was developed to provide training for support teachers and specialists as well as administrative staff of the six schools.

Two types of training have been developed for this project. The first involves training of support teachers, master teachers, and principals in TDM concepts (teacher judgments, planning decisions, and interactive decisions) to bring to the participants' consciousness the factors that impact on teaching decisions in the classroom. Topics include student perceptions, learning strategies, teaching strategies, classroom management, teacher expectations, discipline strategies, and others. The second type of training involves classroom teachers. Using a resource model, participants in the TDM training provide staff development activities for classroom teachers with appropriate follow-up and coaching so that teachers can apply their learnings to their own classroom situations.

By 1986, TDM expanded to include over 30 Baltimore City elementary schools and 10 elementary schools from other nearby counties. Three facilitators were funded with DY monies to provide training and follow up for the new TDM schools and to assist with the development of a second phase of training. Phase II training incorporates much of the ILP training on facilitating change and includes such topics as data gathering and goal setting, team building, school climate, leadership styles, and clinical supervision.

The TDM facilitators provide services to participating schools in four ways:

I. Workshop Sessions: plan and conducts workshops on a variety of TDM topics which focus on refining teachers' abilities to make purposeful decisions as well as focus on the process of facilitating change.

II. School Team: meet with support teachers and administrators to establish and implement goals and objectives based on the school's instructional improvement focus.

III. Collaborative Planning with Principals: meet with individual principals to determine the best ways to improve instruction and school climate in each school.

IV. School-based Staff Development: assist in planning school-based staff development activities on TDM topics.

EVALUATION OF ILP AND TDM

The Instructional Leadership Project has been evaluated by Anne Arundel County Public Schools, the Maryland State Department of Education, and outside

consultants each year beginning in 1981. The evaluations have noted an improvement in student achievement as measured by standardized and criterion reference tests. Attendance figures remained stable at approximately 94%. And those schools which focused on reducing student disruption as their primary goal indeed accomplished that goal. In fact, the most recent study, conducted by the University of Maryland in conjuction with MSDE, shows that 94% of the respondents said the work of the ILP on planned change was seen as highly useful to the schools. No matter what specific goals the school teams set for themselves, each group noted that ownership of school goals had increased significantly which led to a higher degree of goal achievement for most schools, especially after the first year of their participation in the ILP.

Evaluators noted significant changes in the participating schools that are less tangible than test scores. Collaborative decision making among teachers, department chairpersons, and administrators on instructional issues increased significantly. In the most recent study, 97% of the respondents noted an increased confidence of school teams that together they could solve the school's problems. Both the quantity and quality of school-based staff development increased as a result of the ILP as noted by 84% of those interviewed for the 1986 study.

As a resource model, the ILP did not provide direct assistance to classroom teachers nor to students. Nonetheless, 79% of the respondents in the 1986 evaluation noted a positive change for teachers based on improved communication and collaboration as well as increased assistance to classroom teachers in improving instruction. Eighty-two percent also noted a positive change for students based on improved instruction and school climate.

The Teacher Decision Making Project has been evaluated yearly as part of the on-site evaluation process required by MSDE. The results clearly demonstrate that school-based staff development in TDM schools has increased as has peer coaching on classroom management and instructional strategies.

DISSEMINATION OF TOTAL SCHOOL INTERVENTION PROGRAMS

The Total School Intervention Programs have received national recognition as successful school change programs. Anne Arundel County was invited to present the Instructional Leadership Project to the annual meeting of the National Association of School Boards in 1984. MSDE was invited to present the

ILP at the Annual Organization Development in the Schools Conference in 1986. MSDE also received requests from the Maryland Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development to present both TDM and ILP as model school improvement programs. These programs have also been well received at the National Staff Development Council annual conference, 1986.

In 1983, the Deputy State Superintendent of Schools recommended that the Instructional Leadership Project assist with the dissemination of the project to other Maryland school districts. Accordingly, Anne Arundel County Public Schools loaned ILP staff to MSDE to provide technical assistance to local education agencies desiring to develop their own Total School Intervention Programs based on the ILP and TDM models. Such programs have begun in Baltimore, Queen Anne's, Caroline, Dorchester, Howard, Prince George's, and Charles Counties and in Baltimore City with financial support and technical assistance from MSDE through Disruptive Youth funding.

The dissemination of both the ILP and TDM is facilitated by the Disruptive Youth funding from the State Legislature and the technical assistance provided by the Pupil Services Branch of CUSP. It is important to note that dissemination does not mean directly transplanting a project that worked in one school district to all other districts in Maryland. Rather, each local education agency must adapt these Total School Intervention Programs to meet its own specific needs and provide adequate funding for their long-term implementation. Both the ILP and TDM have proved to be excellent models for improving instruction and school climate and reducing student disruption.

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